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TO: ADMINISTRATOR AND SENIOR EXECUTIVES

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ADMINISTRATOR:

EPA's Top Chief Discusses Impact Of Nuclear Closure For Clean Power Plan Compliance. [SNL Financial](#) (6/23, Christian)

reports that in a hearing before the US House Committee on Science, Space and Technology on June 22, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy was questioned on “how the proposed closure of two nuclear plants in Illinois will affect the state’s compliance with the Clean Power Plan.” Rep. Randy Hultgren, (R-Ill) argued that the closure would “significantly impede” Illinois’ ability to comply with the carbon-reduction rule. McCarthy responded that the EPA designed the Clean Power Plan knowing some nuclear facilities may close in the future, and offered assurances about flexibility for compliance.

EPA’s McCarthy Derides “Old, Tired Arguments” That Climate Change Regulations Will Hurt Economy. E&E Publishing (6/23, Holden) reports that at the annual Energy Efficiency Forum on Thursday, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy derided critics’ arguments that climate change regulations will damage the economic and cause job loss as “that old, tired argument” that is “so yesterday.” She also pointed to the “rapid growth of energy efficiency and renewable power,” and added that “innovative local projects can make a tremendous difference, especially in low-income communities.”

Continuing Coverage: House GOP Members Accuse EPA Of Using “Suspect Science.” E&E Daily (6/24, Reilly) reports, in continuing coverage, on the hearing in the Science, Space and Technology Committee used by House Republicans to grill EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy on “everything from the agency’s climate change rules to water regulations to the review of the carcinogenicity of the herbicide glyphosate.” Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas) charged the agency of using “suspect science, questionable legal interpretations and flawed analysis” to draft its climate change regulations. During the hearing, only three Democrats spoke in defense of the EPA, while the remainder instead attended the sit-in on the House floor to try to force a vote on gun legislation.

BROWNFIELDS/SUPERFUND/OTHER CLEANUPS:

New Mexico Sues EPA, Colorado In Mine Waste Case. The AP (6/23) reports

New Mexico will sue the EPA and the state of Colorado over the contamination of waterways from the 2015 Gold King mine spill. The EPA has previously stated that it “takes responsibility for the cleanup at the Gold King Mine,” but also found that the river’s water quality “quickly returned to pre-spill levels.” New Mexico Environment Secretary Ryan Flynn said New Mexico would be interested in settling with the EPA and Colorado. The AP (6/23) also reports that Colorado “is disappointed” that New Mexico chose to pursue litigation rather than other cooperative measures.

Additional Reading.

- ***Congress Continues To Poke At The Politically Sensitive Pebble Mine Controversy.*** Alaska Dispatch News. (6/23, Martinson)

CLIMATE CHANGE:

EIA Report: Clean Power Plan Increases Growth of Renewable Power, Natural Gas. The Charleston (WV) State Journal (6/23, Tincher) reports a new Energy Information Administration study shows that the EPA’s Clean Power Plan will reduce coal and oil fired power plants and “projects electricity generation from renewable sources will increase at an annual average rate of 3.9 percent between 2015 and 2030,” as well as slightly accelerating growth of natural gas power. Even if the CPP never fully is implemented, the EIA analysts determined that renewable energy would still likely grow given “Congress’s recent extension of favorable tax treatment for renewable energy sources.”

Opinion: Trump’s Energy Plan A Threat To Climate, US Economy.

Robert Kopp at Rutgers University writes for the Houston Chronicle (6/23, Kopp) that the Paris climate accord, public policy, and market forces “are already helping push the world away from carbon-intensive fuels and toward renewable energy,” but Donald Trump’s “America First” energy plan would reverse these advances. Citing his own research, Kopp writes that Trump’s policies would elevate atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations to over 550 ppm in the 2050s, compared to below 450 ppm under the Paris accord. Kopp adds that the “Trump Trajectory” would quadruple deaths in the US Southeast to

about 12,000 to 65,000 annually by mid-century, impact some sectors by cutting 15 to 45 working hours per year, and impact \$900 billion of property nationwide.

Opinion: Exxon Probe Could Drive Firms To Cut Climate Research. Jacki Pick, an executive vice president and general counsel at the National Center for Policy Analysis, writes for the [Washington Times](#) (6/23) blasting the state attorneys general probe into ExxonMobil's climate research. "The planning of the inquest goes back to the year President Obama won re-election, and the first casualty of this war on free speech was Peabody Energy" in 2015. The Peabody settlement "leaves corporate counsel with the lesson that the safest course is for their employers to say nothing and know nothing about scientific issues." Pick argues that cutting R&D would harm US firms' competitiveness.

ENERGY:

Pennsylvania Gov Approves New Fracking Rules, EPA Proposal Delay. [Central Penn Business Journal \(PA\)](#) (6/23, DuPuis) reports Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf has signed into law new fracking regulations in the state for "unconventional" drilling sites. To gain bipartisan support, separate consideration will be given to conventional, vertical drilling. Wolf signed another bill granting the legislature "more time to consider the state's strategy for implementing the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan before that strategy is submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency."

Poll: Americans Want Reduced Methane Levels In Environment. The [Boulder \(CO\) Weekly](#) (6/23, Porter) reports that a new American Lung Association poll finds that three out of five Americans "want oil and gas companies to better control the leakage of methane into the environment," and approve of EPA restrictions on the oil and gas industry instituted last month. "The new EPA rules require operators to use optical gas imaging cameras for leak detection and to fix any leaks within 30 days" and that compressor emissions must decrease by 95 percent.

GRANTS:

Georgia City Applies For Brownfield Grant. The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (6/23, Kinch) reports that East Point City in Georgia will file a grant application for the EPA's 2017 Brownfield Assessment Grant Program to cover funding for "cleanup" or "environmental job training."

INTERNATIONAL:

Additional Reading.

- **China Vows To Replace "Poisonous" Running Tracks At Schools.** [New York Times](#). (6/23, Guo)

PESTICIDES:

Activists Hold Rally To Urge EPA To Protect Bees From Pesticides. The [Examiner](#) (6/23) reports that approximately 100 people attended a rally in front of the EPA headquarters in DC intended to "urge the federal agency to ban bee-killing pesticides." The rally, which took place on Wednesday, was sponsored by a coalition of two dozen environmental groups, farmers, and beekeepers.

Local TV Coverage. [KIRO-TV](#) Seattle (6/23, 6:08 a.m. PDT) reports, "Environmentalists both here and around the US are concerned over what they say is an alarming bee colony collapse. Yesterday, dozens of environmentalists rallied in DC and took more than two million dead bees to the Environmental Protection Agency headquarters to bring attention to the plight of the insect. Today, activists here in Washington are hosting an educational event at Matthews Beach Park to illustrate what a summer picnic could look like, if bees aren't saved. They say we're losing 30 to 40 percent of the bee colonies each year." [KOMO-TV](#) Seattle (6/23, 6:19 p.m. PDT) added that the group known as Environment Washington believes "part of what's killing bees is a type of pesticide, known as a neonicotinoid," and that "the EPA has been studying its effects for a number of years and is currently deciding whether to ban certain types that might affect bees." The group is encouraging people to contact the EPA with their opinion on neonicotinoids. [12-TV](#) New Jersey (6/24, 1:46 a.m. EDT) also covered the story, including information about "the mysterious

‘zombie-bee’ parasite that kills honeybees,” and how it has spread to Virginia.

RULES/REGULATIONS/POLICY

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Toxic Chemical Regulation Bill. [KCPQ-TV](#) Seattle (6/23, 6:46 a.m. PDT) reports, “It should soon be a lot easier to protect your family from harmful chemicals lurking in everyday products, thanks to a new bill signed by President Obama.... This is the first overhaul of toxic chemical regulation in about 40 years. It gives the EPA sweeping new power to regulate thousands of toxic substances in things like household cleaners, toys, and furniture. Now the law aims to nationally standardize what is kind of a jumble of state rules governing an \$800 billion industry.” The President was quoted: “Here in America, folks should have the confidence to know that the laundry detergent we buy isn’t going to make us sick, the mattresses our babies sleep on aren’t going to harm them.”

EPA Forwards Final “Exceptional Events” Rule To White House.

[Greenwire](#) (6/23, Reilly) reports that the EPA submitted its final draft of proposed changes to its “exceptional events” regulations to the White House Office of Management and Budget. The bill “is geared to making it easier for states to show that one-time air pollution violations are attributable to forces outside their control and thus should not be counted against their attainment status.”

House Committee Questions EPA Over Differences With EIA Fuel

Projections. [E&E Daily](#) (6/24, Heller) reports that the EPA and the US Energy Information Administration “appear to be far apart in their assessments of consumer demand for so-called E-0 fuel, according to figures discussed yesterday at a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee hearing.” The EIA has placed the total supply of E-0 at 5.3 billion gallons in 2013, whereas the EPA projects only 200 million gallons for next year and beyond. That difference “caught the eye of Rep. Pete Olson (R-Texas), a critic of ethanol mandates, who asked EPA acting Administrator for Air and Radiation Janet McCabe at the hearing whether the agencies share information and

whether demand for E-0 is likely to tumble.” McCabe responded that latest E-0 assessment is from a “very recent report” and didn’t offer an explanation.

Additional Reading.

- ***Make Asbestos A Top Priority Under New Chemical Reform Law, Advocate Says.*** [Bloomberg BNA](#) (6/23).
- ***The Inside Story Of Congress’ Battle For Chemical Reform.*** [Bloomberg BNA](#). (6/24)

WATER:

EPA Announces Filtered Water Now Safe For All In Flint. The [AP](#) (6/23, White) reports the Environmental Protection Agency announced that it is safe for all people in Flint to drink filtered tap water. Previously, the agency had advised women who were pregnant or nursing and children under six years old to continue drinking bottled water, but the agency lifted that recommendation after testing filtered water throughout the city. Flint Mayor Karen Weaver said of the announcement, “It is encouraging news.” Virginia Tech Professor Marc Edwards, whose research helped expose that the city’s water was contaminated with lead, praised the EPA for not lifting the advisory until testing had confirmed that the water filters were working and that lead levels in the city’s water had dropped significantly.

The [Detroit News](#) (6/23, Fleming) reports the EPA and CDC collaborated to test the water in the city before making the announcement. The EPA’s Office of Research and Development deputy assistant administrator Tom Burke said in a statement, “These findings reaffirm the effectiveness of filters at removing or reducing lead. This is an important step forward for providing a stable water system for the City of Flint.”

[Reuters](#) (6/23, Klayman) reports HHS’ Assistant Secretary Dr. Nicole Lurie said in a statement, “Residents can be confident that they can use filtered water and protect their developing fetus or young child from lead.”

Also covering the story are: the [Detroit Free Press](#) (6/23, Spangler), [MLive \(MI\)](#) (6/23, Ridley), and [The Hill](#) (6/23, Cama).

Testing Near Former Wurtsmith Base Finds Chemicals Above Federal

Advisory Threshold. The [AP](#) (6/23) reports preliminary testing at a “residential well near the former Wurtsmith Air Force Base” found “toxic fluorocarbons at concentrations above a federal advisory threshold.”

Residents Call For Public Hearing On NY Department of Health Handling Of PFOA Contamination. The [Brattleboro \(VT\) Reformer](#) (6/22, Esch) reports residents in Hoosick Falls are calling for a public hearing on why the New York Department of Health “didn’t tell residents not to drink their tap water until 18 months after the agency knew of the [PFOA] contamination, and then acted only under pressure from an Environmental Protection Agency official.” The article notes that the “EPA last month issued a standard for long-term exposure to PFOA, following years of public pressure by advocacy groups.”

Alabama Water Systems No Longer Impacted By EPA Health Advisory.

[Alabama Live](#) (6/23, Pillion) reports Alabama state authorities have announced that the state’s water systems are no longer impacted by the EPA health advisory published on May 19 for PFOS and PFOA which set a threshold of 70 parts per trillion. Alabama Governor Robert Bentley said the “last Alabama drinking water system affected by the health advisory had tested below the new threshold.”

Additional Reading.

- ***Group Decries EPA Inaction On Philadelphia Lead Tests.*** [Greenwire](#). (6/24)

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